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79 JOHN F. KENNEDY STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138

Gregory F. Treverton
Lecturer in Public Policy
Senior Research Associate,
Center for Science and International Affairs

(617) 495-9004

November 13, 1987

Judge William Webster
Director of Central Intelligence
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Judge Webster:

I know that you have been dealing with your colleagues, especially STAT [redacted] about our Intelligence Assessment and Policy Program, but I wanted to close the loop from Harvard's end. Let me repeat how much we look forward to the program -- by now, I imagine you have a read-out from the first two executive seminars we have held here in Cambridge. We also look forward to your participation in the kick-off dinner for the Program's Steering Committee, in Washington on December 14th. I know I speak for my colleagues as well, especially Graham Allison, Ernest May and Richard Neustadt.

For your information, I enclose the list of those on the Steering Committee, Graham's letter of invitation for the dinner, and a brief description of the Program that was sent with the letter.

We look forward to seeing you on the 14th. With all best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Gregory F. Treverton

Gregory F. Treverton

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STEERING COMMITTEE
INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT AND POLICY PROJECT

Co-Chairmen:
Dean Graham Allison, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University
Judge William Webster, Director of Central Intelligence

Invitees for Membership:
Morton I. Abramowitz, Assistant Secretary of State, Intelligence and Research Bureau
Michael Armacost, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs
Senator Bill Bradley, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence
Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Counselor, Center for Strategic and International Studies
Frank Carlucci, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Congressman Richard Cheney, House Select Committee on Intelligence
Robert Gates, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Lt. Gen. Edward Heinz, Director of Intelligence Community Staff
William Hyland, Editor, *Foreign Affairs*
Admiral Bobby Inman, Westmark Systems, Inc.
Professor Robert Jervis, Columbia University
General David Jones, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
Richard Kerr, Deputy Director for Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency
Andrew Marshall, Director of Net Assessment, Office of the Secretary of Defense
Congressman Dave McCurdy, House Select Committee on Intelligence
Senator Sam Nunn, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence
Lt. Gen. William Odom, Director of the National Security Agency
Lt. Gen. Leonard Perroots, Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency
James Schlesinger, Counsel, Center for Strategic and International Studies
General Brent Scowcroft, former Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
George Shultz, Secretary of State
Caspar Weinberger, Secretary of Defense
James Woolsey, Shea & Gardner

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HARVARD UNIVERSITY
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GRAHAM ALLISON
DEAN

79 JOHN F. KENNEDY STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138

November 6, 1987

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add

Dear sal :

I am writing to invite you to become a member of the Steering Committee of a Project on Intelligence Assessment and Policy, being conducted by the Kennedy School of Government. The goal of the project, funded by the Central Intelligence Agency, is to improve the interaction between intelligence and policy in assessing foreign governments and making foreign policy. To that end, the project comprises three sets of activities: developing case studies on intelligence assessment and decisionmaking; undertaking a series of one-week training programs at the Kennedy School for intelligence analysts; and organizing a series of study group meetings on specific issues of intelligence assessment and policy.

The Steering Committee consists of high-level current and former government officials from both the intelligence and policy communities, as well as experts from the academic community. We anticipate that this Committee will meet twice a year to discuss general issues in intelligence/policy relations and to provide advice and recommendations for the development of project activities. A list of those we are inviting to become members is attached, along with a project description.

We would be honored to have you as a member of this Steering Committee and to join us for its first dinner-meeting, December 14, 1987, from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m., at Bacon House, 1801 F Street, in Washington. Judge Webster and I will speak briefly about the project. Professor Ernest May of the Kennedy School will then provide a further description of the project and moderate the discussion.

One of my colleagues directing the project will call you in the next few days to answer any questions you may have. We look forward to what we hope will be your favorable response and to your participation in this important project.

Sincerely,

Graham T. Allison

Enclosures

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INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT AND POLICY PROJECT
Project Structure and Planning

I. Overview

The Intelligence Assessment and Policy Project aims to understand better how assessment relates to policymaking and, especially, how policymakers do--and might--use assessments. The three-year program of research and curriculum development is designed to draw on the expertise of both academics and practitioners. By examining and drawing lessons from a series of historical and contemporary cases, the project will develop teaching materials and methods for university courses and training programs for analysts, and produce a variety of publications.

II. Analytic Categories for Assessments

An idealized process by which assessments assist policymaking might be the following. First, a situation exists in which policymakers want to influence or make a decision regarding a foreign government. They need appraisals of the foreign government in order to understand its make-up, resources, objectives, governmental processes, etc. In the course of defining the problem in hand, U.S. objectives, and U.S. options, the policymakers need estimates of the possible effects of U.S. actions on the foreign government and hence of new conditions that the United States may face at some later point. We think of "assessment" as analysis of U.S. problems and policy choices informed by analysis of how other governments may perceive *their* problems and choices. It is hence inherently an activity requiring cooperation and interaction between decision-makers and experts.

In hope of learning how this interactive relationship might be made more efficient and effective, we propose to analyze and to invite informal debate about a variety of cases in which assessment played, or should have played, an important role in policy decisions. We have established an initial framework for these analyses by focusing on six abstract "difficulties" an analyst may face that must be overcome if his/her goal is to be attained. These difficulties fall into three general categories, defined by the reason for the difficulty.

A. NATURE OF THE ASSESSMENT

1. *The unwelcome news difficulty.* In this situation, the analyst's estimate will be bad news to the policymaker, e.g., it provides intelligence that undermines or calls into question the policymaker's current policy or inclinations. The difficulty the analyst faces is that his/her estimate will be ignored.

2. *The too-welcome news difficulty.* In this situation, the analyst knows that his/her estimate will be good news to the policymaker. However, the difficulty the analyst faces is that the estimate will be so welcome that it will be used to justify more comprehensive or extreme policy actions than can be appropriately supported.

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B. ABSENCE OF CRUCIAL ELEMENTS

3. *Missing market difficulty.* In this situation, the analyst has created what he/she views as an important estimate, but discovers that there is no apparent market for the news. The difficulty here is that the estimate will not be utilized, unless the analyst finds or creates the market.

4. *Missing or inadequate product difficulty.* In this situation, the policymaker has specifically requested an estimate or the policy process itself is clearly in need of it, but the intelligence an analyst needs is missing or inadequate. The difficulty here is that the intelligence community is unable to fill its assigned role of contributing to policymaking. Policy may thus be made in ignorance of vital information, and the reputation of the intelligence community itself could be harmed.

C. ORGANIZATIONAL SETTING

5. *"Intragovernmental" difficulty.* In this situation, the analyst provides an estimate in which he/she has confidence, but the different policymakers who receive the estimate have different policy preferences, and the estimate becomes a pawn in their internal games. Here, the estimate may eventually be well-utilized, but the difficulty is that it may be misused, ignored, or used selectively or only after delay.

6. *"Transition" difficulty.* In this situation, a newly appointed official or a new presidential administration faces a policy decision, but the newcomer or newcomers are unfamiliar with the structures and offices of the government and not only may not know which questions to ask but also may not know how to go about finding the necessary answers. The difficulty for the analyst is, again, that policies will be made in absence of adequate assessment, and while it may not do harm to the intelligence community, it will deprive it of early opportunities to make a positive contribution.

The cases to be examined will be chosen on the basis of potential for helping to answer the question, "What makes for assessments that are better than usual?" Partly for sound logical reasons but also because much prior study has focused on mishaps, other cases will contribute by answering, "What made for assessments that were worse than usual?" The following list of questions suggests some of the points to be addressed in each case: Did education, training, and/or career pattern seem to make any difference? What did individuals on the policy side stand to gain or lose from acquiring working expertise about a foreign government? Did the nature of organization or process make a difference? How were analyses of foreign governments affected by the make-up of the analyzing agencies and the mix of types of intelligence (human, signal, etc.) or types of expertise (regional, functional, etc.)? Were overall assessments better to the extent that intelligence analysis was kept separate from decision-making or to the extent that the two meshed? Who asked for (or got) what kind of information, when, and to what result? Did experts and policymakers have different judgments

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about how to communicate with or influence the foreign government? If so, why? To the extent one can judge, who was more nearly right? What propositions are most nearly validated by experience? How and in what circumstances have experts induced alteration in the preconceptions of policymakers? How and in what circumstances have policymakers induced alteration in the preconceptions of experts?

The cases will be crosscut in four categories defining the relationship between the assessing government and the foreign government: familiar friends, unfamiliar friends, familiar foes, and unfamiliar foes. Possible cases are listed under these categories below, although the process of examining them will help to determine if their initial placement is correct or if they, in fact, fit into more than one category. For example, a situation that a policymaker might characterize as "Unwelcome News" may look to an analyst like news for which he faces a "Missing Market." In addition, as cases are studied, the categories may well need to be refined.

DIFFICULTIES	Familiar Friends	Unfamiliar Friends	Familiar Foes	Unfamiliar Foes
Unwelcome News	Suez '56	Marcos Shah	France '40	Iran/contra
Too-welcome News	France '36		Hitler tractable	Arms control treaty violations
Missing Market	Skybolt		Vansittart (UK 30s)	PRC '50
Missing or Inadequate Product	INF '78/9 Yom Kippur War	Shah		
Intragov. Politics	Six-Day War (US)	Lebanon '82/3	Six-Day War (Israel)	
Transition	Truman & Japan		SALT '77	Bay of Pigs

III. Cases

All the historical situations above are possible candidates for case studies. We will also solicit ideas for cases from analysts in the project's training programs and Council participants. We expect to prepare twelve to eighteen cases; for the immediate future, we are focusing on five.

The first is a comparison and contrast of the contribution of assessments to policymaking during the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars. Although the two wars were similar, the first was an intelligence and policymaking success for the U.S. and Israel and the second was a failure,

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so we expect to be able to draw some instructive contrasts. The case will examine both U.S. and Israeli assessments of the situation.

The second will focus on the fall of the Shah in Iran and its aftermath. Drawing on the excellent literature on the subject and the reflections of participants, the case will make explicit the lessons from this intelligence failure. The case may also be broadened to consider more generally the question of why the U.S. has had some successes but mostly failures in its history of assessing Iran.

The third will examine the performance of the intelligence community in the Iran-*contra* case. This case will focus especially on the interaction of the estimating process with the politics of the situation. The purpose of studying this case will, of course, be pedagogic rather than investigative.

The fourth case will consider the Vietnam war--an intelligence success but a policymaking failure. The case will focus on high-level assessment in Washington, especially the evidence and procedures that produced accurate or inaccurate assessments of Vietnam and of the United States.

The fifth case concerns the French in 1940, when extraordinarily accurate estimates of German military plans seem to have been known to analysts but totally ignored or rejected by decision-makers.

IV. The Council

The project will be shaped in part by a series of consultations with current and past senior officials involved in intelligence assessment, policymaking, or congressional oversight. This group, known as "The Council," will consider plans for the project, review its research and case products, and act as both resource and sources of guidance to the effort.

The Council will include a select steering group of about twenty members co-chaired by the Dean of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and the DCI. This steering group will meet twice yearly to provide overall guidance and review of the project. Steering group membership will include senior intelligence community leaders, current or past senior officials with policy roles, and members of Congress involved in oversight of intelligence activities.

In addition, a working-level group will meet more frequently (four to six times each year) to consider particular research products, cases, and other aspects of the project. The working-level group will be somewhat larger (25-40) and will include a core group of regular members. Other individuals with specialized knowledge of the particular topics under discussion will be invited to each meeting.

The format of the meetings may vary, but will generally consist of a late afternoon discussion, followed by a working dinner. Most meetings will be held in Washington.

The first council meeting--which will be for steering group members and Kennedy School project directors--is scheduled for Monday, December 14, 1987, in Washington. This meeting will include presentations by the Harvard participants of the outline of the overall project and an opportunity to discuss its content with the steering group. Dean Graham Allison and Judge William Webster will co-chair this initial meeting.

Coordination and arrangements for all of these meetings are the responsibility of the School's project staff.

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V. Training Programs

The next one-week training program for mid-level intelligence analysts will be held at the Kennedy School the first week of November. Project members have taken careful note of the participants' evaluations of the first, experimental program, and are endeavoring to take account of their primary concern that the cases and discussion more explicitly address the role of intelligence assessment in policymaking. The discussions will also attempt to draw more directly on the experience of the analysts participating. Some existing cases will be modified for this program, and new cases are being prepared.

VI. KSG Staff

The project is directed by Kennedy School faculty members Ernest May, Richard Neustadt, Gregory Treverton, and Peter Zimmerman. Administrative assistance is provided by Nancy Huntington; research coordinator is Lynn Whittaker.

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